



# **WASTE MANAGEMENT AND MINIMISATION PLAN**

## **2025–2031**



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# Introduction

Far North District Council (FNDC) has a statutory responsibility to promote effective and efficient waste management and minimisation within the Far North District. To do this, FNDC is required to adopt a waste management and minimisation plan under Section 43 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

This WMMP is a guiding document which identifies FNDC's vision, goals, objectives, targets and methods for achieving effective and efficient waste management and minimisation. It also provides information on how FNDC intends to fund the activities of the WMMP over the next six years.

This WMMP outlines the FNDC's commitment to sustainable waste management over the next six years (2025 - 2031). As the first phase of the district's 25 -year Solid Waste Strategy (SWS), this WMMP provides a roadmap towards achieving a circular economy—a system where resources are reused, repurposed, and regenerated rather than wasted.

The plan focuses on the four key goals from the Solid Waste Strategy:



## What Informs this Plan?

There is a clear legislative and policy framework within which the FNDC provides waste services and facilities in the Far North District. A list of the applicable legislation is detailed below:

- Waste Minimisation Act 2008
- Local Government Act 2002
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Climate Change Response Act 2002
- Litter Act 1979
- Health Act 1956

Whilst the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 sets out the legislative requirements for solid waste, the Government's waste and resource efficiency strategy (GWRES) provides the government's strategic direction for waste management and minimisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. This WMMP aligns with the goals set out in the SWS and objectives found in the GWRES.

Local, regional and national plans and policies affect the FNDC's provision of waste and diverted material services. Primarily, they are requirements under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 and Local Government Act 2002.

# Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Targets

## Vision for the Future

Our approach for waste minimisation and management in the Far North District aligns with the vision of the Far North's strategic 80-year strategy for the district – Far North 2100:



## Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1: Reduce the amount of waste that is disposed of inappropriately

#### Objectives:

- Increase the amount of waste that's disposed of responsibly, such as through recycling or composting.
- Maximise the value of reusable materials by keeping them in use instead of throwing them away.
- Increase public awareness of appropriate waste disposal and compliance.

### Goal 2: Make Resource Recovery and Responsible Waste Disposal everyday activities

#### Objectives:

- Increase the percentage of waste that is recovered and reused, rather than going to landfill.
- Make sure that resource recovery services, like recycling centres, are available and convenient for everyone.
- Support systems that make it easier to reuse items instead of throwing them away.

### Goal 3: Encourage a Local Circular Economy

#### Objectives:

- Increase community involvement in circular economy practices, like repair workshops or local recycling programs.
- Grow the district's ability to reuse and repurpose materials, keeping waste out of the landfill and supporting local jobs.

### Goal 4: Protect and Regenerate the Environment

#### Objectives:

- Reduce the negative effects that waste has on water, land, and air quality.
- Remediate and restore problematic waste sites.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from waste activities, helping to fight climate change.

# What Happens with Our Waste – Overview of Existing Waste Management and Minimisation Infrastructure and Services

The FNDC Waste Assessment completed in 2023 and revised in April 2025 contains information on the current services provided by FNDC and non-FNDC solid waste services. A summary of the current services is outlined below:

## Services Provided by FNDC

### Drop-off facilities

- A network of 16 refuse transfer stations (RTS) across the district, accepting various waste materials.
- A network of 11 Community Recycling Centres across the district where domestic quantities of standard recyclable materials can be dropped off for free.

### Resource recovery centres (RRCs)

- **RCCs:** Two RRCs in Kaitiāia and Waipapa, offering recycling and waste disposal services.
- **Kerbside collection:** Limited kerbside collection services in specific areas, typically involving pre-paid refuse bags.
- **Public place bins:** Regular emptying of public litter bins and a limited number of public place recycling bins.
- **Services and operating hours:** Increase operating hours and services over the summer period to accommodate the larger population.
- **Waste education and promotion:** FNDC delivers various waste education and promotion programs, including workshops, school programs, and community clean-ups.
- **Subsidised recycling programmes:** battery recycling and electronics recycling

## Non-FNDC Provided Services and Facilities

### Kerbside collection

Private companies offer kerbside collection services for refuse and recycling, providing a range of options for urban residents.

### Waste processing

Limited private material processing facilities exist in the district, with most recycling and waste sorting done manually at the source. Either at RTS/CRC sites or at the kerbside.

### Product stewardship

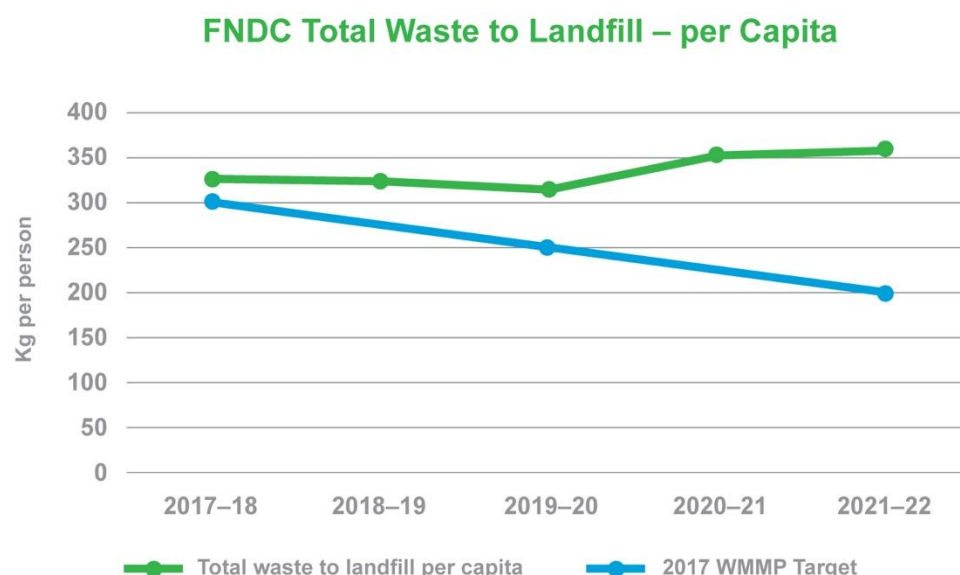
Various product stewardship schemes operate in the district, such as Agrecovery and Tyre Wise Programme.

## Volume and Composition of waste

The FNDC Waste Assessment also outlines available data for waste collected, recycled and disposed of in the Far North District. A summary of the data is outlined below:

### Progress Against the 2017 WMMP Target: Total Waste to Landfill

The 2017-2023 WMMP aimed to reduce the total waste to landfill per capita, including both residential and non-residential sources. Targets were set to achieve a reduction from 300kg per capita in June 2017 to 250kg by June 2020 and ultimately to 200kg by June 2023. Despite these ambitious goals, the actual waste per capita saw a slight decrease from 2017/18 to 2019/20, followed by an increase through to 2021/22. By the end of the WMMP period, the waste per capita was higher than at the start, reflecting challenges in achieving the 37.5% reduction target set in both the 2011 and 2017 WMMP's.

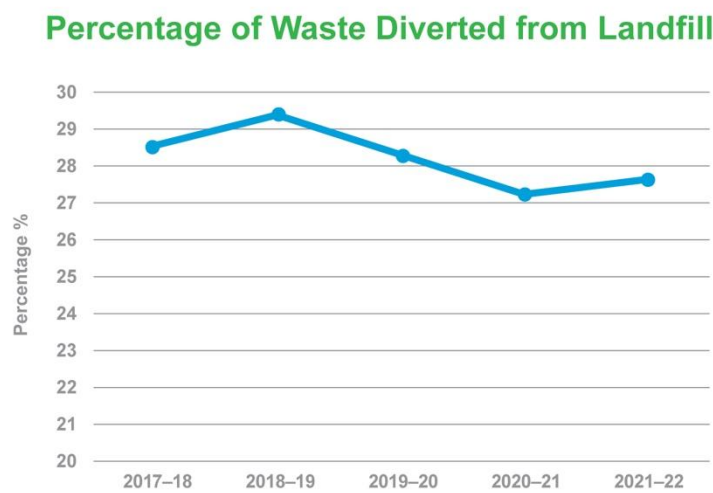


**Figure 1:** Waste to landfill per capita trends from 2023 Waste Assessment (s.4.4.1)

The FNDC's waste per capita is comparable to similar councils in New Zealand with predominantly rural populations. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that rural residents may rely on methods such as farm landfills, offal pits, or burning, which are not captured in official data and could have better environmental outcomes if diverted through proper waste management channels.

## Total Known Waste in the Far North

Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, total waste tonnages in the district remained relatively consistent, despite population growth. However, from 2019/20 to 2021/22, an upward trend emerged in both total wastes generated, and tonnes sent to landfill (Figure 2). Additionally, the proportion of waste diverted from landfill decreased gradually since 2018/19, which affected recycling markets. Before the 2017 WMMP, the diversion rate was 28%-31%, compared to lower rates in recent years.

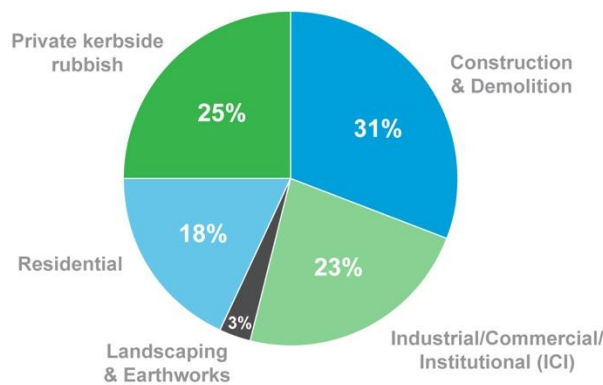


**Figure 2:** Diverted waste trends from 2023 Waste Assessment (s.4.4.1)

## Sources of Waste to Landfill

A SWAP (Solid Waste Analysis Protocol) analysis identified construction and demolition activities as the largest contributors to waste by tonnage (31%), followed by residential kerbside rubbish (25%), and industrial/commercial/institutional sources (23%). Combined residential and private kerbside rubbish accounted for 43% of total landfill waste, with non-residential sources comprising the remaining 57%.

### All Waste Streams, Composition by Source November 2022



**Figure 3:** Observed waste compositions of waste to landfill

Given the limited access to data about waste services not delivered by FNDC, the SWAP analysis relies on national average statistics where local information is not available, particularly in the non-residential waste sources.

## **Kerbside Waste Composition**

The SWAP analysis of a sample of kerbside waste collected from various areas showed that organics made up the largest component, with food scraps alone constituting 36% of total weight. Plastics and paper were the next largest categories, with both divertible and non-divertible materials contributing. Variations were observed in composition based on receptacle size, with 240L bins showing unusually low green waste content.

## **Illegal Dumping**

Illegal dumping remains a significant issue, with various forms reported, including bags placed beside public bins, waste in bush areas, and improper kerbside use. A total of 1,351.5m<sup>3</sup> of illegally dumped waste is collected annually at an average cost of \$ 116,000. However, volumes of waste that are burned, buried, or otherwise uncollected remain unknown.

## **Waste Composition and Diversion Potential**

The composition of total waste to landfill reveals high contributions from organics and treated timber. While the district's diversion potential is significant, challenges remain in separating and redirecting materials such as food waste, green waste, and recyclables. The 2022/23 SWAP analysis estimated that compostable and recyclable materials account for a substantial proportion of kerbside refuse, indicating opportunities for improved diversion and waste minimization.

In summary, while some progress has been made, the FNDC faces challenges in achieving its waste reduction and diversion targets, underscoring the need for continued improvement in waste management practices and infrastructure.



# How Much Better Could We Do?

## Future Demand

Future demand for waste services in the Far North District will be shaped by a range of factors, including demographic shifts, economic and industrial activity, land use changes, and community expectations. Population growth is projected to be moderate, with an aging demographic expected to dominate. Commercial and industrial trends, such as the growth of forestry, horticulture, and service industries, will also play a role in shaping waste types and volumes.

While the district's landfill capacity is sufficient for the medium-to-long term, there will be increasing pressure to improve waste diversion and minimization. Community expectations for accessible recycling and resource recovery facilities are growing, with satisfaction surveys indicating room for improvement in overall waste services.

Economic activity and land use changes are also significant drivers. Growth in GDP and shifts in agriculture toward forestry and horticulture may alter waste streams, including a reduction in livestock waste and an increase in plant-based waste. Seasonal variations from holiday homes are expected to stabilize, with a more permanent residential population influencing service demand.

Projected waste tonnages indicate modest increases in residential waste in line with population growth, with opportunities for significant landfill reduction through improved recycling and organics diversion. For non-residential waste, economic growth will drive volumes, though targeted diversion efforts can reduce landfill reliance.

Natural disasters and national policy changes, including product stewardship schemes and waste levies, further underline the need for adaptive and resilient waste management strategies. By addressing these demand drivers, FNDC can ensure sustainable and responsive waste services for the future.

## Future Planning Framework

### FNDC's Role

**The FNDC plays a critical role in the development and implementation of a robust WMMP as part of the future planning framework. This role encompasses the following key areas:**

#### Strategic Leadership and Planning

FNDC sets the long-term vision for waste management within the district, ensuring alignment with national policies such as the Aotearoa Waste Strategy. Through the WMMP, FNDC develops strategic goals, policies, and implementation plans that drive waste minimisation and resource recovery efforts. This involves analysing trends, forecasting future waste challenges, and setting clear priorities for sustainable waste management practices.

## **Service Delivery and Infrastructure Management**

FNDC is responsible for ensuring that the community has access to essential waste services, including kerbside collection, transfer stations, and community recycling centres. It also oversees the planning, development, and maintenance of infrastructure that adapts to changing waste management needs, ensuring services remain efficient, accessible, and environmentally responsible.

## **Education and Community Engagement**

Promoting a culture of sustainability is a core focus for the FNDC. This involves educating and empowering residents, businesses, and community groups to actively participate in waste minimisation initiatives. Through public awareness campaigns, workshops, and partnerships, FNDC drives behavioural change and fosters community-led waste solutions.

## **Collaboration and Partnership Building**

To ensure a cohesive and effective approach to waste minimisation, the FNDC collaborates with iwi, hapū, community organisations, neighbouring councils, and national agencies. By building partnerships, the FNDC enhances access to funding, resources, and innovative solutions, creating opportunities for shared success and regionally aligned waste management practices.

Through these roles, the FNDC seeks to integrate legal compliance with environmental stewardship, community values, and cultural heritage. This ensures the WMMP contributes to a sustainable and inclusive waste management system that supports a cleaner, greener future for the district.

# **Key Issues**

**In the Waste Assessment the following issues have been identified requiring attention in this WMMP:**

## **Accessibility of Recycling Services**

Current recycling infrastructure and services must expand to meet increasing demand. Although new Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) have been added, accessibility remains uneven.

## **Increasing Waste to Landfill per Capita**

Waste generation has risen since 2020, necessitating stronger measures to address both the volume of waste and its environmental impact.

## **Illegal Dumping and Disposal**

Inappropriate disposal methods such as dumping, burning, and burying waste present significant environmental challenges. Enforcement and education are required to address this issue effectively.

## **Visibility of Effectiveness of Residential Recycling**

The performance of recycling services needs better monitoring to ensure FNDC's educational and operational efforts are driving desired outcomes.

### High Organic Waste Volume

Organic waste remains a significant contributor to landfill and greenhouse gas emissions. The absence of local processing facilities for food scraps and green waste is a critical gap to address.

### Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste

Nationally, C&D waste constitutes the largest portion of landfill volumes. Construction economic activity in the Far North contributes a similar percentage of GDP compared to national figures, highlighting the need for targeted diversion initiatives.

### Legislative Impacts on Costs and Services

Changing regulatory frameworks, including the Waste Disposal Levy and potential product stewardship schemes, will influence both costs and service delivery. FNDC must remain adaptable to these changes.

## Funding

**The implementation of the FNDC WMMP is supported through a combination of funding sources, including user charges, ratepayer contributions, and waste disposal levy payments from central government.**

### User Charges

User charges fund services like kerbside collections and the management of rubbish and recycling stations. These fees link service use to funding and promote waste reduction. The FNDC can set service fees above or below cost recovery or offer services for free to encourage better waste management outcomes.

### Ratepayer Contributions

Ratepayer funds support public goods and community-focused waste services. These include kerbside recycling collection, subsidising transfer station operations where user charges are insufficient, addressing illegal dumping, servicing litter bins, implementing licensing requirements, delivering education programs, and monitoring and reporting on plan implementation.

### Waste Disposal Levy Payments

FNDC receives a share of the national Waste Disposal Levy, allocated based on population. These funds are mandated to promote waste minimisation in alignment with the WMMP. Activities funded through the levy include waste education, partial support for kerbside recycling, and projects that advance the plan's goals and objectives.

In addition, FNDC may apply for additional funding from the national Waste Minimisation Fund to support specific projects. Applications may be submitted independently, in collaboration with other councils, or with external partners.

Further details on funding sources, allocations, and quantities are outlined in FNDC's Long Term Plan and annual updates to the Long-Term Plan.

## Contestable Waste Fund

Section 47 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 gives councils the ability to make grants to a person, organisation, or group to promote or achieve waste management and minimisation. Under this WMMP the FNDC will give grants at its discretion and on any terms or condition it deems appropriate, provided there is an allocated and approved budget for that activity.

FNDC is committed to supporting community and stakeholder initiatives that promote or achieve waste minimisation and management goals. Grants can be provided to individuals, organisations, or groups using allocations from Waste Disposal Levy funds.

The availability and amount of funding in the Contestable Waste Fund is determined through FNDC's Long Term Plan process. Applications for funding will be evaluated based on their alignment with the WMMPs vision, goals, and objectives.

Key assessment criteria will include but is not limited to:

- The applicant's capability to successfully deliver the proposed project
- Governance and accountability arrangements
- Track record and experience with similar projects
- Potential for significant and measurable contributions to waste minimisation.
- With priority given to local Iwi/hapū or community led enterprise and initiatives.

By fostering partnerships through grants and financial support, FNDC aims to empower the community and encourage innovative solutions to achieve a sustainable waste future.

## Action Plan

**The Action Plan, as set out in the following pages, has been developed to assist the FNDC and community to work towards achieving the vision, goals, and objectives set out in the wider SWS.**

The Action Plan shows the methods FNDC will use to achieve effective and efficient waste management and minimisation within the Far North District, including collection, recovery, treatment and disposal services, facilities provided or to be provided by FNDC and other waste management and minimisation actions by FNDC, including education and public awareness activities.

Where actions have operational or financial implications, they need to be confirmed in the FNDC's core planning documents - the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan.

This Action Plan aims to set out clear, practical initiatives that FNDC will implement, either on our own or jointly. While the Action Plan forms part of the WMMP, it is intended to be a useful 'living' document that can be regularly updated to reflect current plans and progress. Under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 the plans can be updated without triggering the need for a formal review of the WMMP, if the changes are not significant and do not alter the direction and intent of the strategy.

In some cases, further research might be required to work out the costs and feasibility of some projects. This might change how, when, or if they are implemented. Completing some other actions might depend on changing contractual arrangements with providers or setting up new contracts.

## Implementing the Plan

The actions in the Action Plan (below) have been developed out of the workshops with the Solid Waste Rōpū Mahi (Working Group), based on the options presented in the Waste Assessment.

Due to the broad composition of the Solid Waste Working Group, some additional options were also identified.

A	REDUCE WASTE TO LANDFILL
1.	Investigate and implement a contestable fund or grants pilot programme to respond to new opportunities for waste services including recycling and waste minimisation initiatives in various sectors, such as construction and demolition, or community-led solutions for food waste collections and repurposing processing. Prioritise projects ready for delivery and ensure clear criteria, monitoring and reporting for funding initiatives.
2.	Investigate subsidising non-FNDC services that increase recycling and waste minimisation and implement findings of investigations as they arise.
3.	Investigate and implement initiatives based on the findings to increase the range of divertible material at FNDC waste facilities
4.	Investigate introducing rates-funded kerbside recycling, food scraps and rubbish collections and implement findings of investigation
5.	Continue providing and where appropriate optimise access to drop-off points for recycling and rubbish in rural areas
6.	Investigate requiring a Waste Management and Minimisation plan as part of the building consent process.
7.	Increase education and collaboration focusing on problematic waste streams, to promote waste minimisation, recycling, and sustainable practices for business' and public. Expand FNDC's waste minimisation education programme to include Construction & Demolition related businesses
8.	<p>Advocate for legislative changes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Building Act provisions addressing waste minimisation</li> <li>• Product stewardship schemes</li> </ul> <p>Restrictions on non-recoverable items</p>
9.	Investigate options for organic waste collection and processing, including the option to support development at the regional level
10.	Assess and address electronic waste in the district by understanding current levels, continuing to promote and evaluate existing recycling systems, and implementing national initiatives to reduce electronic waste at a local level
11.	Enhance waste data management by aligning local reporting with the National Waste Data Framework Standard, utilising centralised government platforms, establishing benchmarks, and regularly monitoring FNDCs progress performance. against targets. Seek to require greater transparency in the quantities and type of commercial waste streams collected and methods of disposal.
12.	Review the Waste Management Bylaw (2016)

<b>B</b>	<b>RESOURCE RECOVERY and WASTE DISPOSAL as EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES</b>
1.	Investigate options for FNDC-owned RRC in the Southern area
2.	Optimise the number, location, and services provided at RTS / CRC network.
3.	Investigate and implement ways to ensure recovery services that are subsidised by FNDC are accessible and incentivise new initiatives where appropriate.
4.	Investigate options to introduce repair cafes and other services that promote circular initiatives at FNDC-owned waste facilities.
5.	Collaborate with iwi/hapu, potentially through Para Kore, to lead and implement waste minimisation programmes, encouraging more community buy-in e.g., beneficial reuse of organic material
6.	Continue providing waste minimisation education to raise public awareness, promote reuse initiatives, support zero-waste lessons, advise businesses, and support the implementation of sustainability programmes.
7.	Regularly review and measure the impact of the Waste Minimisation Education Programme on waste reduction and diversion, ensuring it targets all parts of the waste system
8.	Support and promote sustainable agricultural waste management by backing nationwide initiatives like Agrecovery and Plasback, investigating complementary schemes, encouraging industry-led sustainability programmes, and providing targeted education in collaboration with local farming associations and advisory services.
9.	Regularly review and measure the impact of the waste minimisation education programme on waste reduction and diversion, ensuring it targets all parts of the waste system
10.	Investigate and implement initiatives to reduce illegal dumping, including increased surveillance, stricter enforcement with fines or infringement notices, public awareness campaigns highlighting associated costs, and potential enhancements to penalties and enforcement options
11.	Continue to support community clean-up events by covering disposal costs
12.	Engage with stakeholder organisations that represent the elderly, disabled and rural community groups to ensure that waste initiatives that are subsidised by FNDC consider their unique waste management and minimisation needs.

<b>C</b>	<b>ENCOURAGING A LOCAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY</b>
1.	Continue involvement in regional discussions regarding solid waste.
2.	Support community-led circular economy initiatives such as continuing to cover disposal costs for community clean-up events, engage community groups to raise awareness about waste impacts, and support projects that encourage sustainable waste practices
3.	Promote the reuse shop at Kaitiāia RRC
4.	Investigate ways to work with identified key waste generating sectors (such as Construction & Demolition, Food and Accommodation Services, Tourism etc) to develop circular solutions for their sector's discarded materials.

<b>D</b>	<b>PROTECT AND REGENERATE THE ENVIRONMENT</b>
1.	Evaluate the environmental impacts of backyard burning and rural waste practices and develop targeted education campaigns to raise awareness while strengthening compliance measures.
2.	Assess environmental risks of historic waste sites
3.	Identify and measure emissions from FNDC-managed waste activities
4.	Ensure waste disposed from FNDC collections and facilities occurs at waste disposal facilities with appropriate landfill gas control measures
5.	Assess current rural waste disposal methods, including farm dumping practices, and work with agricultural organisations and farming communities to raise awareness about the environmental impacts and promote sustainable alternatives like Agrecovery and other waste management practices -develop targeted education campaigns to raise awareness while strengthening compliance measures.
6.	Investigate and implement strategies for increasing the return of organic material to soil.
7.	Ensure safe disposal services for hazardous waste are available in the Far North and investigate opportunities for enhanced hazardous waste management practices.
8.	Assess the exposure of waste infrastructure and closed landfill sites to natural hazards like flooding, coastal erosion, and seismic activity.
9.	Continue to provide public place litter and recycling bins, optimise as needed.



## Monitoring and Reporting

The FNDC will monitor and report on the implementation and effectiveness of the WMMP through a structured and transparent system. Accurate, reliable data is critical to evaluate progress towards the Plan's vision, objectives, goals, and targets and to plan effectively for future demand.

FNDC intends to monitor and report on progress regarding the WMMP and will develop and implement a clear, transparent monitoring and reporting system. Accurate information on how services provided by FNDC are performing is essential for monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan's vision, objectives, goals and targets, and planning for future demand.

FNDC's current level of service and performance measures are aligned with the 2021-2031 LTP and are focussed on reducing waste to landfill. FNDC will review its performance measures as part of its next LTP to align with this WMMP.

Measures that provide a broader picture of the waste situation and how to minimise the amount of waste going to landfill will assist FNDC in identifying more targeted actions in the future. Data will be gathered through:

- Annual resident and ratepayer surveys
- Contractor reporting against key performance indicators
- Solid Waste Analysis Protocol Audits (SWAPs)
- Waste Assessments
- Consent compliance systems

The FNDC will report progress of the implementation and effectiveness of this WMMP through:

- Annual Reports
- Monthly performance reports
- FNDC's website

The FNDC will also provide progress reports of expenditure of its waste levy funds to the Ministry for the Environment and provide data in accordance with the national reporting systems.



**Te Kaunihera  
o Te Hiku o te Ika**  
Far North District Council

**5 Memorial Ave, Kaikohe 0405  
Private Bag 752, Kaikohe 0440  
PH 0800 920 029**

